



February 5, 2015

Written testimony of Deborah S. Torrey, Administrator, Shady Knoll Health Center Concerning

***Proposed H.B. No. 5586 AN ACT INCREASING NURSING FACILITY RATES.**

***Proposed H.B. No. 5812 AN ACT CONCERNING A COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR NURSING FACILITIES.**

***Proposed S.B. No. 231 AN ACT CONCERNING COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES FOR NURSING HOMES.**

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and to the members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Deborah Torrey. I am the Administrator at Shady Knoll Health Center in Seymour, Connecticut. Shady Knoll is a longstanding provider of nursing care in the Naugatuck River Valley area. We care for up to 128 residents with over 200 employees. We are a CMS 5 star facility with an excellent reputation and an outstanding rehabilitation department.

Thank you House Republican Leader Klarides, and Representatives Perillo and Gentile, and State Senator Crisco for introducing these bills. And thank you also to the Human Services Committee for including these bills at this public hearing.

Medicaid Nursing facility rates have been basically flat since 2007, but costs have been dramatically rising. The acuity of our residents, the supplies, equipment, and staff we need to take care of the elderly has increased as the cost of doing business has escalated. We desperately need the increased payments based on a cost of living adjustment as recommended in these bills.

Some of the issues we face on a daily basis while the rates have been stagnant:

- The cost of care our residents require; medications, equipment (tube feedings, wound vacs, hooyer lifts, stand aides, mechanical systems upgrades, fuel expenses, etc.), supplies (wound care, chemotherapy treatments), dementia care, transportation to physician appointments, etc. Our admissions come to us with medical and behavioral issues that strain our staffing.

- Payment for resident care; the time between a resident coming to Shady Knoll to when a Medicaid application is granted can take months. During that time, the facility receives no money for the care provided to our resident.
- Residents who do not have a viable discharge plan or payment source.

We have reached out to our local legislators, Senator Robert Kane and Representative Theresa Conroy, to make them aware of our issues as a healthcare facility struggling with the financial and regulatory constraints placed upon us.

I am asking you to advance these bills and provide our nursing facilities the help they need to care for our residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Olszky".